



Dundee depot closed until after 9th July loading day as it is full.

New telephone number for depot :- 07871 169 362

New email address for the Raven Trust :- reception@theraventrust.org

Dear Friends - there is a lot happening. Please use the new Raven Trust email address (reception@theraventrust.org) as the old one (strachur@aol.com) is going out of use. The new depot phone number is for deliveries to the Dundee depot only. Please use the old one for information about Malawi, box contents etc.

The depot at Dundee filled very quickly and the next container will load on 9th July. Please wait until after that to deliver goods. A computer system for managing the boxes is being installed and the volunteers need to be trained in using it over the next couple of

Containers....



Container FCL100 arrived at Ekwendeni on the 15th April. John and Kevin were present at the unloading. The weather in Mzuzu has been a season with extended rain. African rains are to be experienced with very heavy downpours, not a drizzle! The container arrived in the rain and the hospital administrator went with Ben to collect the MRA customs officers so that the container could be officially opened. Some two hours later permission was given to open the doors and the rain stopped. While the ground was damp, everyone took boxes straight into vehicles or the store so as to keep mud off the boxes. On completion of unloading, the hospital chaplain led a suitable prayer of thanks for the dryness and for the work of the Raven Trust in sending this

the 100th container to Malawi, As usual all the helpers were given a soft drink. Their numbers seem to grow towards the end of the unloading! Everyone dispersed, the container doors closed just as another large downpour occurred. Thank you Lord for that dry spell in a period of weeks when the rain had not stopped. The container FCL102 sent from Dundee on the 19th March is expected soon in Ekwendeni. There was some delay with the shipping company due to a port strike and change in port loading then the weather delayed the mother ship for South Africa.

As intimated in the previous Newslink and on the website, all future containers will be shipped from Dundee where the depot is open on Saturdays from 10am till noon. Contact number is 07871 169 362. Blythswood have been very supportive to the work of the Raven Trust for which we thank them. They have changed the points for collection and are no longer able to uplift from many areas.. It will therefore be necessary to make new and alternative arrangements to deliver to 11 Peddie Street, Dundee. The Raven Trust does not have any pick-up points or transport to collect.

The Strachur depot has now closed down and useful items cleared - even the humble sack trolleys and pallet truck have been moved to Dundee. This is a good opportunity to **thank all** those who have over the years made the operation from Strachur possible. The receivers of boxes, sorters, people entering data in the shipping lists, catering staff, loaders and stackers. There are those who have organised the legal paperwork and computer inputting. So many people..... The Church and Minister for allowing the Raven Trust to use the manse outbuildings as a store free of charge over the past 13 years. This has been wonderful and so much appreciated.

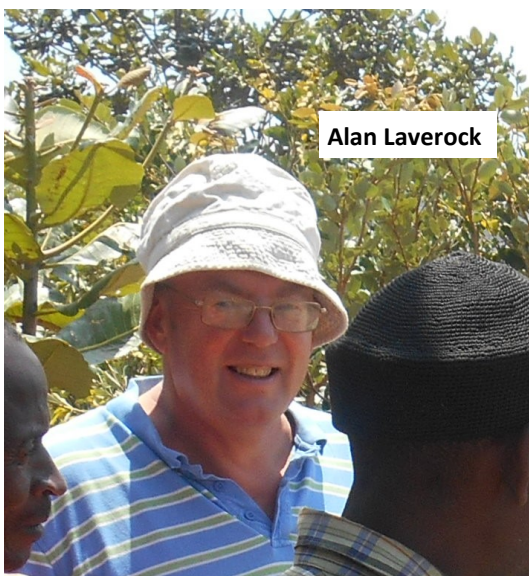
Visitors to Malawi Summer 2016....

Kevin Bickerstaffe is concentrating on the maintenance of water wells at both Ekwendeni and at Livingstonia. Marion Bickerstaffe is undertaking teaching in Ekwendeni CDSS and at Katawa primary school which she is enjoying as there is no backroom paperwork!



Bob Baxter is helping John with the Shonga bridge construction as well as his own projects for Alba Aid.

John Littlejohn is doing further well testing particularly on shallow wells now that fencing is being erected around them. He will return next year to see the effect of the fencing on water quality. A colleague of his is going out on his first visit to see the work going on in the area.



Alan Laverock will oversee various projects this visit and he will facilitate visits by the dentists and eye people later in the year.

Project updates

Fencing and concrete of well aprons

Kevin has been motivating the water engineers at the hospitals to repair both boreholes (deep wells) and shallow wells for various communities. When the water flows again there is much dancing and excitement.



The repaired aprons and fences are designed to keep animals away from the water source and to provide cleaner water.

There is much to be done and a good start is being made. The next obstacle is the continuation of funding and how to make this pilot project sustainable in the longer term.

Henga water

A recent survey failed to find suitable water and the test boreholes struck rock after 6 metres. The proposal is to undertake an electrical resistance geological survey of a site nearby that looks promising. Some projects can prove particularly challenging and require much perseverance before a solution is found.

Shonga Bridge

The bridge has withstood the winter floods although the water level came up to within a metre of the proposed walkway - as predicted. The remaining pillars are currently being built and the walkway will be installed during a later visit in the year.



Zenda Bridge

This bridge, too, has withstood the floods but two big tree trunks blocked the main archway and caused some erosion on the bank. John will be able to rectify that.

Gorodi Road

Over the last couple of years Johnny Dowds has been working to improve the road - grading the surface and building culverts to divert water off the road.



However, the heavy rains have taken their toll on the road. Government agencies, in attempt to help, levelled some parts but, in so doing, they removed the graded surface so that, with the heavy rain, the road was turned into a slippery quagmire. Dr Lyn Dowds sent us this picture of Johnny and Lyn trying to get back up to Livingstonia.



Famine situation

As this Newslink is being written, the international food agencies and the Malawian Government are getting mobilised mostly along the main road arteries. Many villagers live in remote areas and these are having food supply problems. We have taken some maize to Zenda where the bridge was built last year. While not being an expert on these matters it would appear from talking with various authorities that towards the end of this year and early next year before the next crop is ready there will be a major food crisis across Malawi and into neighbouring countries where the rain has fallen much later than usual

Gift Aid

With the changes in tax levels this is a reminder to those who donate to the Raven Trust to please ensure that the amount they claim in gift aid is covered by their particular tax level.

For more updates please visit the website at www.theraventrust.org or phone Sue or Linda

Prayer Points

Praise

- for the safe arrival and dry distribution of the boxes
- for the continued goodwill of people in authority to the work of the Trust
- for all the willing volunteers who get on with all the practical tasks - sourcing, loading and distributing the much needed goods

Pray

- for the spiritual health of the church in Malawi as it faces the challenges of ethnic spirituality and dubious theological ideas within the church
- for the physical health and safety of the ministers as they face the huge task of serving large, scattered congregations who are facing severe food shortages this year
- for the safety of volunteers both in Malawi and the UK
- for the new Trustees of the Raven Trust, that the ones that God has chosen will be willing to get on with the task with enthusiasm and insight

Thank you for your help and prayers

God bless – from John, Sue, Cathie, Iain and Alan



The Raven Trust

Bay Villa, Strachur, Argyll, PA27 8DE

Telephone +44 (0) 1369 860436

Email:- reception@theraventrust.org

www.theraventrust.org.uk

Scottish charity SC30260

Company limited by guarantee Co No SC362281